

# Liberty Downtown Master Plan

Liberty, Missouri

November 2005





# Acknowledgements

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Stephen Hawkins, Former Mayor  
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Jim Robertson, Former Councilperson  
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## Stakeholders

The City of Liberty wishes to thank the stakeholders representative of the community's civic groups, boards, commissions, merchants, property owners, neighborhoods, economic development groups, churches, schools, and County agencies for their participation in the **Liberty Downtown Master Plan** Planning Process. The Plan would not have been possible without your input.

## **Facility Host**

Scoops Custard Shop, 18 North Main Street, Liberty, Missouri

## ***Contents***

<b><i>Executive Summary</i></b>	<b><i>1</i></b>
<b><i>Chapter 1:</i></b>	<b><i>5</i></b>
<i>Planning Process and Context</i>	
<b><i>Chapter 2:</i></b>	<b><i>9</i></b>
<i>Priority Recommendations</i>	
<b><i>Chapter 3:</i></b>	<b><i>23</i></b>
<i>Branding/Heritage Tourism Details</i>	
<b><i>Chapter 4:</i></b>	<b><i>25</i></b>
<i>Additional Land Use, Recommendations, and Policy Strategies</i>	
<b><i>Appendix A:</i></b>	<b><i>31</i></b>
<i>Development Projects</i>	
<b><i>Appendix B:</i></b>	<b><i>37</i></b>
<i>Additional Parking Information</i>	
<b><i>Appendix C:</i></b>	<b><i>39</i></b>
<i>Funding Sources</i>	
<b><i>Appendix D:</i></b>	<b><i>51</i></b>
<i>Development Illustrations</i>	



# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Downtown Liberty 2020 – envision a lively, pedestrian-friendly destination that offers a variety of retail/office services, high quality restaurants and businesses, and entertainment opportunities to area residents as well as to visitors from surrounding communities and the Kansas City region. This is what community stakeholders see when they look at the well preserved historic buildings and small town charm of the Downtown Square and its surroundings.



*Revitalized Downtown Liberty*

The ***Liberty Downtown Master Plan*** is the documentation of this vision created in a highly participatory process led by the Downtown Task Force.

## Priority Recommendations

The planning process resulted in many recommendations. The high priority actions are summarized below with associated implementation strategies. They are outlined in more detail in Chapter Two.

### Priority Policy/Regulation Recommendations

#### **Balance retail, office and residential uses:**

- Consider regulations that reserve first floor space for retail uses, especially around the Downtown Square
- Retain major civic facilities in the Downtown area

#### **Provide dedicated funding for Downtown initiatives:**

- Consider amendments to existing Tax Increment Financing Plans to target resources to Downtown and consider including allocations to Downtown in new Tax Increment Financing Plans.
- Consider dedicating a set, minimum percentage of the City's Capital Improvement Program to Downtown Projects on an annual basis.
- Explore the establishment of a Downtown Community Improvement District to help fund Downtown management, operations and projects.
- Explore opportunities to utilize revenues created through the use of the Missouri

Department of Economic Stimulus Act (MODESA) to help with the cost of Downtown public infrastructure improvements.

- Consider authorizing a Local Option Sales Tax to assist with Downtown economic development preparation and retail development.

**Improve access to Downtown with a focus on improving the pedestrian environment:**

- Utilize a street hierarchy system to help prioritize public improvement allocations, application of development incentives and targeting of traffic calming on Downtown streets.
- Consider converting Harrison Street to allow two-way traffic at the intersection with Mill Street providing more direct access from points south to the Downtown.
- Maintain the railroad south of Mill Street for the potential of commuter rail.



*Pedestrians*

**Priority Downtown Management Recommendations**

**Establish an independent management entity to focus on Downtown initiatives:**

- Consider using representatives from the Downtown Task Force as the interim, short-term implementation team.
- Establish a permanent, independent management structure.
- Adopt a detailed work plan with both long and short term goals focused on funding, staffing, marketing and development.

**Priority Marketing Recommendations**

**Increase local and regional awareness of the assets of Downtown Liberty:**

- Complete and implement a comprehensive marketing and media plan for the Downtown.
- Implement a Civic Pride Campaign.
- Implement a Tourist Outreach Campaign focused on the City's extensive historical resources.

**Establish marketing and branding based on heritage tourism:**

- Develop and implement a branding campaign.
- Adopt a tag-line: this should be one of the first goals of the interim management team.
- Develop tourism guides for major sites.
- Aggressively and proactively recruit restaurants and retail businesses.

- Implement consistent merchandising practices.
- Locate and develop a visitor's center with predictable hours.

### Priority Downtown Parking Recommendations

#### Address parking proactively and aggressively:

- Increase and intensify parking enforcement.
- Increase on-street parking wherever possible.
- Construct parking garages as outlined in Chapter 2.



*On-Street Parking Example*

### Priority Development Projects

#### Make Main Street Main Street:

- Enhance Main Street with streetscape amenities beginning at the north end to improve the pedestrian experience between the Historic Liberty Jail Museum and the Downtown Square.

#### Construct parking solutions:

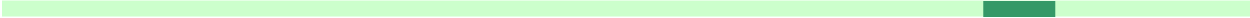
- Construct a parking garage east of City Hall on existing surface lots.
- Consider the area east of Gallatin Street between Kansas Street and Mill Street for a second parking structure.

#### Provide traffic calming on Mill Street and create a gateway at the intersection of Mill Street and Lightburne Street:

- Calm traffic on Mill Street by providing on-street parking on the north side.
- Redevelop the intersection of Mill Street and Lightburne Street as a gateway to Downtown.

### Conclusion

The continued vitality of Downtown Liberty is clearly a priority for the community, from its designation as a target development site in the ***Blueprint for Liberty: Economic Development Plan*** to the overwhelming support for the Downtown documented in the 2004 community survey. The ***Liberty Downtown Master Plan*** outlines an aggressive strategy for the future, the implementation of which will rely heavily on cooperative efforts, partnerships and significant volunteer commitment. Public investment is fundamental; however, recommendations for the use of public dollars are strategically targeted to encourage and augment private development. As Liberty grows, so do the challenges of



maintaining the small town feel and sense of community. A strong Downtown is essential to this goal.

# Chapter 1. Planning Process and Context

Two significant planning efforts and a community survey established the foundation leading to the **Liberty Downtown Master Plan**. The first plan is the **Blueprint for Liberty – Future Land Use Plan**, which includes the following recommendation related to Downtown:

*“Maintain the Historic Liberty Square as the central core and community gathering space for Liberty while establishing smaller, neighborhood focal points throughout the City. Attention to maintaining the Square and the surrounding business district as the community’s primary focal point should continue. Future neighborhoods will need their own focal points like the Square, but on a much smaller scale for neighborhood level social, civic and economic purposes. Additional focal points in the City should not be viewed as competition for the Square because of the Square’s distinct function as the core and community centerpiece....”*



*Downtown Plan Boundary*

The second plan is the **Blueprint for Liberty: Economic Development Plan** adopted in 2001.

This plan recommends Five Target Development Sites including the Liberty Triangle, the South Liberty Parkway Corridor, Heartland Meadows, the former Guys Plant, and the Downtown Business District. The Plan states the following relative to the Downtown’s role and the rationale for continued attention and investment:

*“Downtown Business District – The historic Square is thriving with retail shops and service companies. It will continue to be the central core and community gathering place for Liberty; therefore, the continued vitality of this area is important to the community....”*

Finally, a citizen survey conducted in 2004 found the following:

- 88% of those surveyed thought it was important for the City of Liberty to have a vibrant Downtown
- 78% of those surveyed were supportive of having the City provide economic incentives to encourage development in Downtown Liberty
- 67% of those surveyed thought the City should improve streetscaping and building façades in Downtown Liberty

## The Downtown Task Force

The City of Liberty initiated a Downtown Task Force in July of 2004. It was established to serve as an advisory committee to the City Council on matters of importance to the Downtown area. Increased interest in the Downtown rose from a visioning process conducted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the National Main Street Center. The work of the Task Force involved a variety of initiatives, from Downtown lighting to researching best practices for Downtown revitalization efforts and coordination of marketing efforts. A primary responsibility of the group was to guide completion of the **Liberty Downtown Master Plan**. Their participation and leadership helped shape the planning process and recommendations.

The plan that follows is the result of collaborative efforts of community stakeholders who live and work in the Downtown area, the Downtown Task Force, and the City of Liberty. Downtown Liberty is more than just the Square. It is the residential, business, governmental, and historic community that surrounds the Square defined by stakeholders as the area between Mississippi Street on the north, the railroad tracks on the

south, Prairie Street on the west, and William Jewell College on the east.

The planning process took place over a six-month period. It involved:

- A four-day design charrette
- A series of stakeholder interviews
- Several public meetings



*Development Discussion Group*

## The Design Charette

A charrette is an intensive, collaborative design process during which a design team, community stakeholders, and residents work toward defining a shared vision and detailed implementation strategy for a project area. The Liberty Downtown Master Plan Design Charette was held February 23 – 26, 2005. The charrette afforded participants the opportunity to provide valuable input and feedback about Downtown issues. The charrette began with a public

meeting at City Hall and included small group discussions around a set of key Downtown issues:

- Development
- Preservation
- Marketing/Branding
- Management

Public meetings each day kept the broader community informed of progress and provided an opportunity for additional feedback. The charrette concluded with a presentation at Scoops Custard Shop during which the community reviewed the Downtown future land use recommendations, possible physical development projects, marketing/branding ideas, heritage tourism, implementation strategies, and longer-term management ideas generated as a result of the process.

## Stakeholder Interviews

In order to gain insight into specific Downtown concerns, the design team interviewed several community stakeholder groups in preparation for and during the design charrette. Those interviewed included:

- Civic Groups
- Mayor, City Council, Boards and Commissions
- Merchants
- Neighborhoods
- Economic development agencies
- Churches
- William Jewell College
- Clay County officials
- Public school district representatives

The information gained during the stakeholder interviews helped frame the discussion during the remainder of the planning process.



*Business Owners and Merchants*

## Public Meeting

After the charette, Liberty residents and stakeholders attended a public meeting in May 2005 to provide additional comment on the Plan's recommendations for issues related to:

- Proposed future land use strategies
- A recommended hierarchy of streets
- Parking
- Improving Main Street
- Capitalizing on tourism
- Calming traffic on Mill Street and improving the pedestrian environment



*Public meeting at Scoops Custard Shop*

## Chapter 2. Priority Recommendations

This chapter outlines the **Priority Recommendations**, which are organized into five main focus areas:

- General Policy/Regulation
- Management
- Marketing/Branding & Heritage Tourism
- Parking
- Priority Development Projects

In each area the recommendations are followed by specific implementation strategies.

### Priority Policy/Regulation Recommendations

Recommendations in this focus area center on the overarching policies that will guide future public decisions related to the Plan and suggested areas of additional or enhanced regulation that further implement the Plan.



*Charette Participants*

**Priority Recommendation – The Downtown Square and surroundings should not only be the government and civic center, but should also be a lively retail and people centered location.**

**Implementation Strategy:** *Consider regulations that reserve street level locations around the Square and on certain high priority streets for retail uses in order to provide continuous interest and draw pedestrians between key destinations. Service and professional uses and supporting governmental uses should be located off the Square or on the second story.*

**Implementation Strategy:** *Adhere to a policy of locating important governmental facilities in the Downtown area, such as the proposed Police Facility. Civic uses help secure the continued viability of downtown areas by attracting visitors and residents, insuring a certain level of activity in the area, and creating spin off investment by virtue of the public investment made.*

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### Priority Recommendation - Funding:

**Operating and capital funding is essential to any successful revitalization effort. The commitment to Downtown should be supported with public and private financing.**

**Implementation Strategy:** Given Downtown's role as the heart of the community, the City should consider amending existing Tax Increment Financing Plans (TIF Plans) and/or consider insuring future TIF Plans target resources to Downtown. These TIF Plans typically subsidize development on the fringe of the City in a way that could be detrimental to Downtown. It is reasonable that the proceeds from such development help support efforts to maintain the vitality of the City's core.

**Implementation Strategy:** Consider dedicating a set minimum percentage of the City's Capital Improvement Program to Downtown projects on an annual basis. At such time that the Capital Plan is reviewed, priorities are set and projects are funded, the Downtown priority projects outlined in Appendix C should be consulted. Appendix C includes a table titled "Ten-Year Capital Improvement Priorities," which illustrates how dedicated funding from a variety of sources

could accomplish some of the Plan's short-term projects.

**Implementation Strategy:** Consider the establishment of a Downtown Community Improvement District (CID) to help fund Downtown management, operations and perhaps priority projects. A CID would give Downtown Liberty property owners the opportunity to assess or tax themselves for improvements and services that benefit Downtown.

**Implementation Strategy:** Explore opportunities to capture a portion of the new state and local taxes created from projects that make use of the Missouri Department of Economic Stimulus Act (MODESA). The revenues generated could be used to fund the costs associated with Downtown enhancement projects that involve improving public infrastructure.

**Implementation Strategy:** Consider authorizing a Local Option Sales Tax to assist with Downtown economic development preparation. The one-half percent tax could help finance redevelopment of Downtown Liberty and its historic districts. Downtown retail development could also be funded with the tax.

### Priority Recommendation - Improve

motorists' access to the Downtown, but not at the expense of pedestrian access and safety.

Improving walkability is a high priority.

Accommodate the potential for commuter rail.

**Implementation Strategy:** Establish a street hierarchy to help prioritize public improvement dollar allocations, application of development incentives, and targeting of traffic calming. Streets are defined as A, B, and C Streets.

- “A” streets are top priority and link Downtown to the larger community and support the continued vitality of the Downtown Square. They include: Main, Mill, Kansas, Water, Franklin, and Lightburne streets.
- “B” streets are second priority and are more local and service oriented. They include: Gallatin, Prairie, and Mississippi streets.
- “C” streets have a lower priority in terms of capital expenditure and have a local access and service function. They include: Missouri and Leonard streets.

**Implementation Strategy:** Consider converting Harrison Street to allow two-way traffic at the intersection with Mill Street to improve access from Mill Street to the Downtown Square.

**Implementation Strategy:** Maintain the railroad south of Mill Street as recommended in the

**Blueprint for Liberty** and work with the Regional Transit Alliance to bring commuter rail to Liberty.

## Priority Downtown Management Recommendations

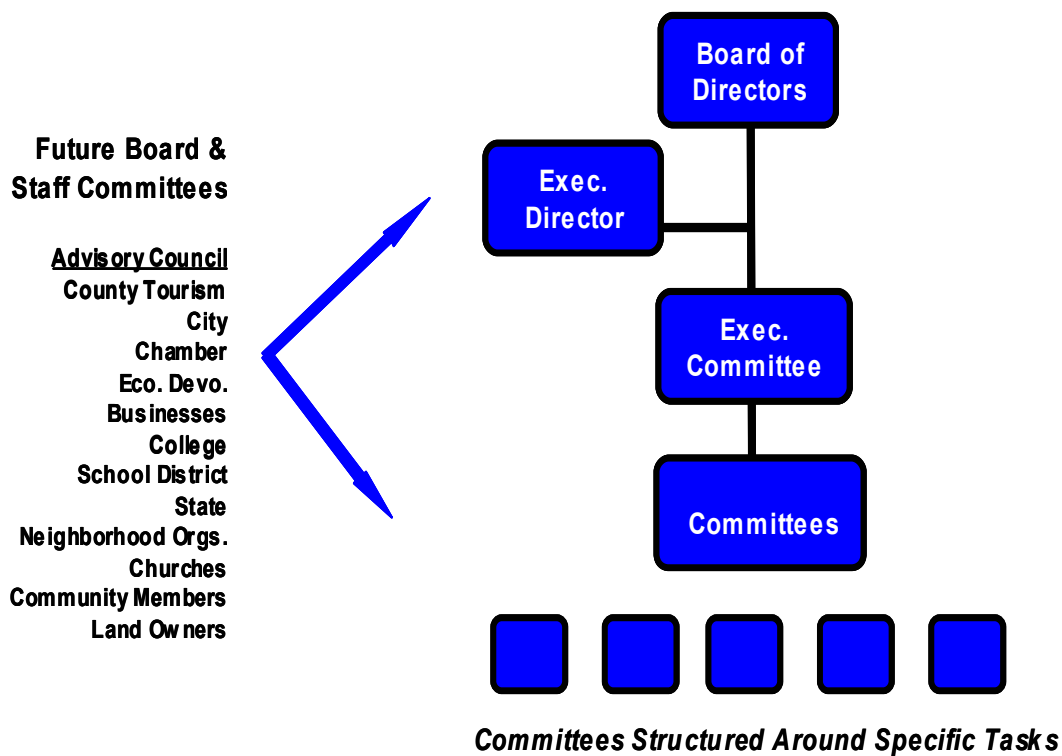
In order for the goals and priorities associated with the **Liberty Downtown Master Plan** to be achieved, community leaders and organizers, agencies, and other stakeholders should work together under a sustained system of management. Attracting and sustaining high quality executive staff is essential and also one of the biggest challenges.

Priority Recommendation – Form an independent management entity whose primary tasks should be strategy formulation, and refinement and implementation of the Liberty Downtown Master Plan. An independent organization will maintain focus on and concentrate energy on Downtown issues. It may be necessary to rely on a partnership with the City in the near term for immediate staff support.

**Implementation Strategy:** Representatives from the Downtown Task Force should continue to meet as the interim implementation team. This team should be supported by City staff with the goal of setting up the independent management structure.

**Implementation Strategy:** Establish an inclusive, independent management structure with representation from a wide range of business, government and economic development interests; historic, educational and religious institutions; neighborhood and community organizations.

The management model should include a Board of Directors, an Executive Director, an Executive Committee and Sub-Committees. It should be structured as a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization in order to better carry the Downtown agenda forward and have access to diverse funding options. The following graphic illustrates the organizational structure and participants.



**Implementation Strategy:** Adopt a work program with the following short-term and long-term goals.

#### Short Term

- **Funding:** Pass the hat, membership dues
- **Staffing:** Partnership with the City, Executive Loan, Volunteer

#### Longer Term

- **Funding:** Focus on consistent sources including TIF and Community Improvement District resources.
- **Staffing:** Hire full time staff

**Implementation Strategy:** Adopt a work program including the following staged activities. These activities may occur concurrently:

#### Stage One

- **Stage 1 Participants:** Economic development, business, and Community Advisory Council Members
- **Stage 1 Activities:**
  - Create the Compelling Case
  - Think Strategically
  - Improve Public Relations
  - Coordinate Project Management

#### Stage Two

- **Stage 2 Participants:** Business Advisory Council Members

- **Stage 2 Activity:**

- Develop operating standards

#### Stage Three

- **Stage 3 Participants:** County tourism, City, business, economic development, land owners, and Advisory Council Members
- **Stage 3 Activities:**
  - Real Estate Development
  - Business Attraction/Retention
  - Marketing for Customers

## Priority Marketing Recommendations

Marketing is a major priority for Downtown.

Many of the recommendations in this focus area relate to the management recommendations and should be reflected in the action plans developed by the management team. Recommendations in this section center on overall Marketing, Branding and Heritage Tourism. The following represent short term initiatives.

**Priority Recommendation - Encourage local and regional awareness of the assets of Downtown Liberty. It must be targeted to retain existing businesses and attract new customers and businesses.**

**Implementation Strategy:** Complete and implement a comprehensive marketing and media plan for the Downtown. This would begin with a benchmark survey of why people visit Downtown Liberty today and what kinds of stores or experiences would encourage them to come back. The marketing plan would be structured around the results.

**Implementation Strategy:** Implement a Civic Pride Campaign. This is an outreach program to educate residents and merchants about the Downtown revitalization effort, the importance of delivering a consistent positive message about the community, and to communicate results of the revitalization efforts.

**Implementation Strategy:** Implement a Tourist Outreach Campaign. This effort strengthens partnerships with William Jewell College and tour groups to leverage currently underserved visitors, such as students, Historic Liberty Jail Museum and Jesse James Bank Museum tourists, and architecture enthusiasts. The goal is to give them a reason to stay and enjoy all that Downtown Liberty has to offer. This may be in the form of coupons to local businesses, a boxed lunch, or special event promotions.

**Priority Recommendation - Liberty's heritage should form the backbone of its marketing and branding campaign, drawing on the wealth of cultural and historic resources.**

**Implementation Strategy:** In order to better express Liberty's brand ideal locally and regionally, the community should adopt a tag-line. The Downtown Task Force looked at a number of ideas, and recommends that the final selection be the first job for the new management organization. The ideas discussed include:

- Stay Awhile
- The Legends Live On
- A Town with a Storied Past
- Become Part of the Story
- Give Me Liberty
- Heaven in the Heartland
- Liberty:  
More \_\_\_\_ than You Ever Imagined!

**Implementation Strategy:** Develop the brand identity and launch the campaign. There are endless opportunities to reinforce a community brand at every point of contact, supporting consistency in marketing efforts. They include:

- Using the tag-line in existing public and private efforts

- Organizing around a community event as the official launch of the new brand
- Beginning creative design development of the following:
  - Interstate identification for marketing and regional way-finding purposes
  - Local entry and way-finding signage
  - Ads
  - Direct mail
  - Tourism outreach brochures
  - Civic banners
  - Visitors center
  - Retail promotional materials
  - Other Downtown events promotion

**Implementation Strategy:** Create more retail variety, especially restaurants, by doing the following:

- Organize the existing business community as a recruiting team.
- Target two to three retail/restaurant prospects that may want to open a location in Downtown Liberty.
- Prepare an appropriate incentive package.
- Schedule and complete personal visits to prospects.
- Follow-up, follow-up, follow-up.

**Implementation Strategy:** Establish consistent merchandising practices and storefront appearances. Important first efforts include:

- Agree on hours of operation – the more hours stores are open, the better, especially on the weekend.
- Provide professional assistance to shopkeepers on merchandising – this could be either an outside consultant or a volunteer.

**Implementation Strategy:** Develop tourism guides for the City's historical assets using a common tag-line, graphics and other identifying features. Emphasis should be placed on cross promotion.

**Implementation Strategy:** Locate and develop a visitors center. People need a place to start. A location on the Square would be best. An alternate in the short term is to design and produce a number of kiosks to be placed in existing retail locations with visitor information. Specific requirements of any visitors center should include:

- Easy accessibility and high visibility to first time visitors
- Information highlighting Liberty's history
- Knowledgeable staff
- Consistent and predictable operating hours

## Priority Downtown Parking Recommendations

A high priority for the Downtown Task Force is to implement parking solutions. This is imperative to any successful development or redevelopment initiative.

### Priority Recommendation – Make parking a top priority for the Downtown.

**Implementation Strategy:** *In the short term, consider increasing and intensifying parking enforcement by revising the current ticketing and fine structure. Provide for two-hour parking on the Square and one half block adjacent to the Square. Provide unrestricted parking elsewhere. Double the existing fines and remove warning provisions. Consider merchant validation within the revised system.*

**Implementation Strategy:** *In the short-term, increase on-street parking in the following locations:*

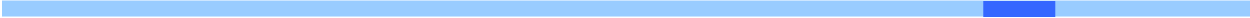
- *Mill Street: Provide on-street parking on the north side of the street between Leonard and Harrison Streets. (Parking will also serve to calm traffic on Mill Street improving the pedestrian environment.)*

- *Kansas Street: Provide additional spaces on the north side of Kansas Street across from City Hall and in front of the Baptist Church.*
- *Leonard Street: Stripe spaces on the west side between Mill Street and Franklin Street.*
- *Missouri Street: Stripe the entire west side from Mill Street to Kansas Street. Consider moving the bill paying box and mailbox but keep them in close proximity to the Square and stripe spaces on the east side from Mill Street to Kansas Street.*
- *Provide clear signage for existing and new parking.*

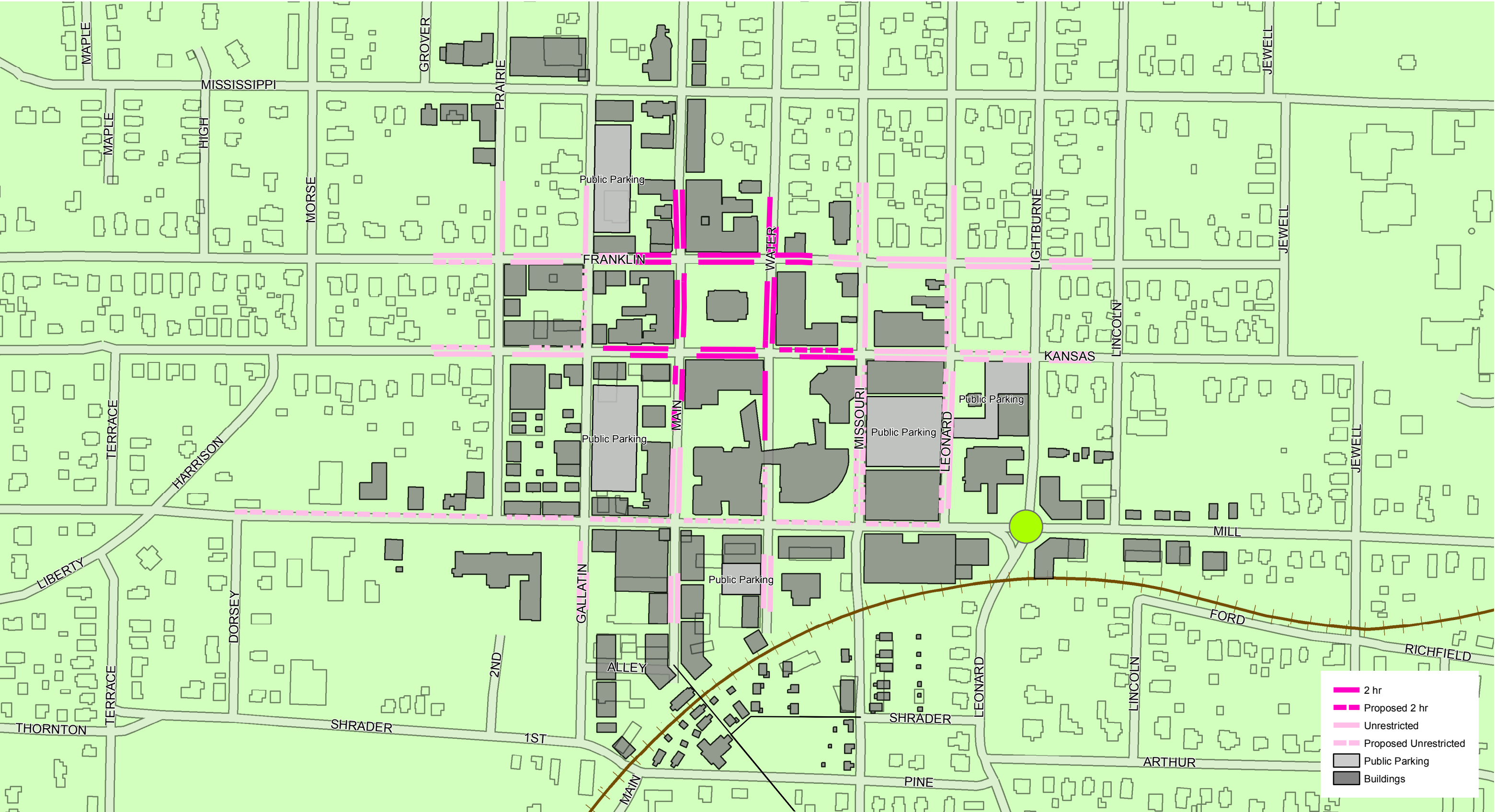
**Implementation Strategy:** *Over the mid-term and longer-term, consider parking garages in the locations identified below. Additional information on these projects is included under the Priority Development Projects section of this Chapter.*

- *East of City Hall on the existing City/County parking lots (mid-term)*
- *East side of Gallatin Street between Kansas Street and Mill Street (mid-term)*
- *East side of Gallatin Street between Franklin Street and Mississippi Street (long-term)*

Additional information on future parking demand and capacity is provided in Appendix B. Given the development proposed in the Plan, there is an anticipated total demand for slightly more than



1,800 spaces and a supply of slightly more than  
2,000 spaces (assuming adoption of all  
solutions).



# Liberty Downtown Master Plan

## On-Street Parking Plan November 2005

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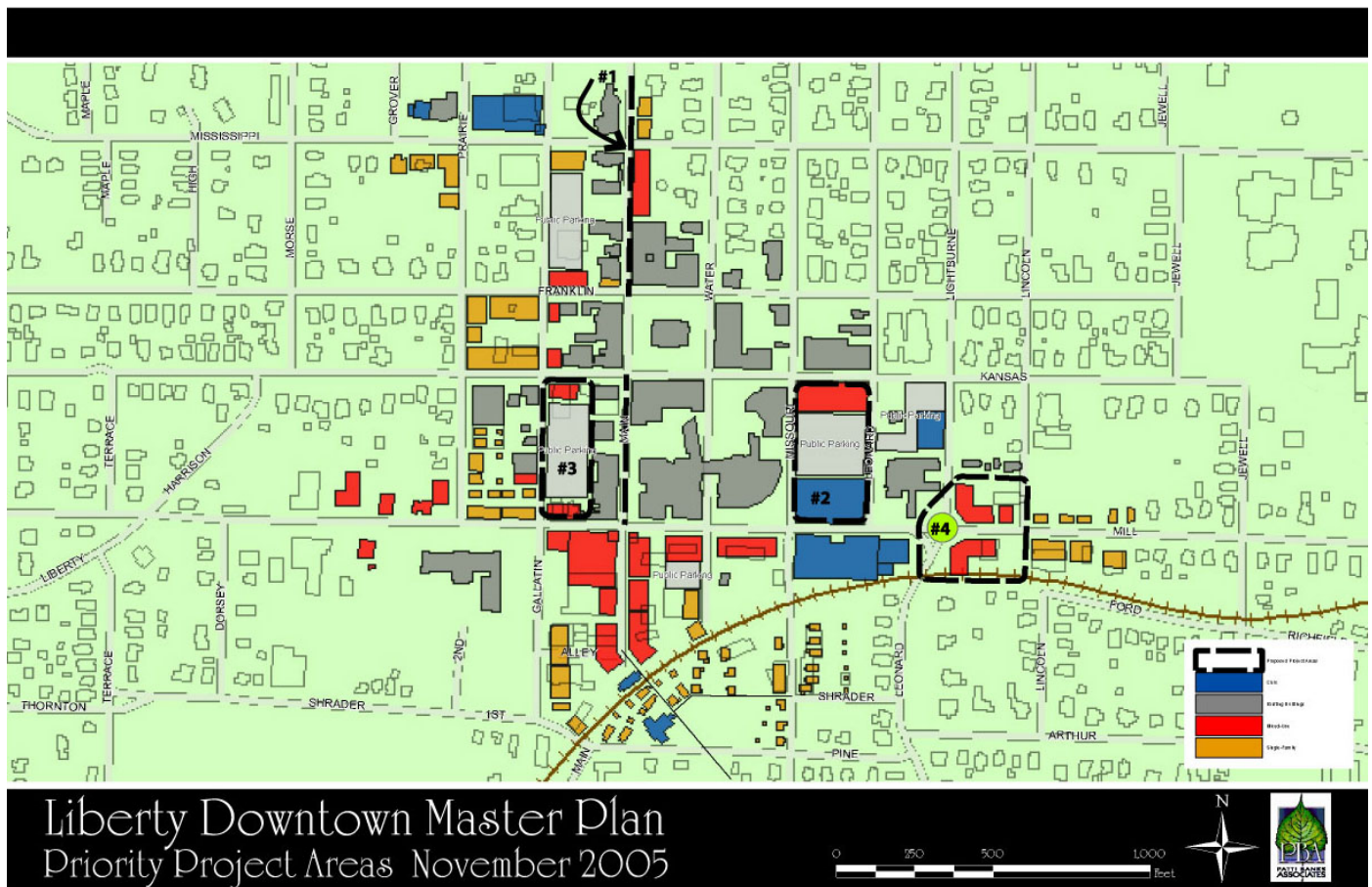
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**PBA**  
PATTI BANKS  
ASSOCIATES

## Priority Development Projects

The Downtown Task Force identified several development projects to be realized over the next several years. Costs are conceptual and given in 2005 dollars. The Priority Project Area Map below illustrates the location of the four top priority projects.



**Priority Recommendation – Seek opportunities to increase the intensity and density of Downtown by encouraging infill development, building parking structures, and providing areas for new retail development.**

**Implementation Strategy:** Fund and promote use of the City's existing design assistance fund for the upgrade of Downtown building façades.

**Implementation Strategy:** Develop a funding plan and complete the high priority development projects as described below. The following information is provided for each:

- Brief Description
- Order of Magnitude Cost
- Responsibility



*Revitalized Main Street looking South from  
Historic Liberty Jail*

#### **Making Main Street Main Street – Area #1**

*This project involves enhancing Main Street with streetscape amenities, which will generally include street trees, decorative streetlights, and street furniture on Main Street from Franklin Street to Mississippi Street (and ultimately Kansas Street to Mill Street). The proposed streetscape elements will improve Main Street's pedestrian experience. Phase I includes replacing deteriorated curbs and sidewalks, and purchasing and installing new street furniture. Phase II includes adding trees and pedestrian lighting in tree lawns.*

- **Conceptual Project Cost (Phase I and II):**  
\$1 million
- **Responsibility:** Business owners, property owners, and the City

### Parking East of City Hall – Area #2



*Proposed Development East of City Hall*

This project involves the development of a three-story parking garage with more than 800 spaces on Missouri Street, east of City Hall in place of the present surface parking lot. A two-story mixed use development (consisting of retail / office on the lower floors and residential above) is proposed to the north of the garage, and a three- to four-story civic building to the south. A study is recommended to finalize the number of feasible spaces given the site conditions, access locations, and compatible retail and office development expectations.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$20 million
- **Responsibility:** City and County

### Parking East Side of Gallatin Street/ Kansas Street to Mill Street – Area #3



*Proposed Gallatin Development*

This project involves the development of a three-story parking structure with over 725 spaces on the east side of Gallatin Street between Mill and Kansas streets. Two-story, mixed use development (consisting of retail/office on the lower floors and residential on the upper floors) to the north and south will anchor the garage. A study is recommended to determine the number of feasible spaces given the site conditions, access locations, and compatible retail and office development space.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$15 million
- **Responsibility:** Business owners and Property Owners/Private Development

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Intersection of Lightburne Street & Mill Street –  
Area #4

The **2000 Mill Street Corridor Plan** makes specific recommendations for improving infrastructure and urban design along Mill Street. Although not specifically endorsed, the Task Force did agree that efforts should be made to calm Mill Street traffic. The Task Force supported creating on-street parking opportunities on the north side of Mill Street, improving sidewalks with tree lawns (where feasible), planting trees and installing pedestrian lighting in tree lawns, and redeveloping the intersection of Lightburne and Mill to accommodate space for mixed use development.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$10 million
- **Responsibility:** City, State, County,  
Business owners and Property owners

Liberty's east side residents, who use Mill Street to access I-35, expressed concern at the public meetings about traffic calming plans for Mill Street. The Task Force discussed the importance of the South Liberty Parkway's completion because it will reduce the amount of through-traffic along Mill Street, thereby improving the walkability of Mill Street.

# Chapter 3. Branding/Heritage Tourism Details

## Branding

Downtown is a great place to live, but business owners have been unable to consistently attract workday shoppers, visitors, and William Jewell College students and families. Participants indicated that the difficulty may be caused by the inconsistent operating hours, shopping choices, and the quality of storefront merchandising. In order to better express Liberty's brand ideal to local residents and business owners, as well as to the region at large, a brand catch phrase or tag-line would be helpful. Liberty's history should be part of the brand.

## Heritage Tourism

During the Liberty Charette, participants noted that Liberty has a wealth of historic resources and important national and regional stories about its 19<sup>th</sup> century architecture, historical figures and cultural assets. Through heritage tourism, Liberty can take advantage of opportunities to:

- Enhance existing attractions
- Encourage revitalization
- Capitalize on heritage tourism interests and markets
- Attract new investment to historic areas

- Tell the Liberty story
- Define, identify, and change perceptions



*Jesse James Bank Museum*

Because of its rich and diverse historic resources, Liberty could become a **Heritage Destination**. It has the opportunity to tell a powerful and significant story of settlement and community growth that is not fully understood or appreciated by residents and visitors. These resources, including historic districts, landmarks and museums, should work together to be a part of a total visitor experience that will make the City a unique destination. Heritage tourism is a growing industry and a growth opportunity for both Liberty and the region. In order to capture this important market and its benefits, the City needs to ensure that its story is clearly told.

Heritage destinations are designed to be “ready for company,” and to ensure that the visitor experience is authentic, informative, and entertaining.

Neighborhood, community, and museum resources should be linked to form discovery networks that will introduce visitors to Liberty. New signage systems, orientation markers, and “anchor” attractions, such as the historic jail and bank museum, are distinguishing features that can be used to market Liberty.



*Lightburne Historic District Signage*

Across the country, citizens and officials are collaborating to establish heritage areas that preserve regional history, tell the story of unique resources and areas, encourage community revitalization, and improve the quality of life in their communities. The U.S. Congress has designated 23 or more National Heritage Areas

in 15 states. The Mid-America Regional Council and the City of Kansas City, Missouri, have taken steps to initiate both a regional Heritage Area and a Kansas City Heritage Corridor. Liberty should support these regional efforts as the local program is developed.

As a part of this effort, Liberty’s past should be introduced to and interpreted for people of all ages. The City’s unique story is a source of pride. Heritage resources can be used for educational purposes, making the City and its heritage venues a total learning environment. Connections into a larger regional context further enhance the value of the resources, link diverse sites and settings, and develop opportunities for new types of events and programs. New tourism will create economic opportunities as visitors purchase goods and services. New interpretation, signage, exhibits, and information systems will make the City’s heritage venues more accessible and visible to residents and visitors alike. Investment in heritage venues will refocus creative energy on existing resources, historic settings, and reinforce Liberty’s brand.

## Chapter 4. Additional Land Use, Redevelopment, and Policy Suggestions

In support of the priority projects illustrated on the Downtown Master Plan Map, the Plan recommends the land use and redevelopment strategies outlined below.

### Define Expansion Areas for Government and Retail Uses

The future vitality of Downtown relies on both governmental and retail expansion. The Downtown Plan proposes space for both. The government expansion is concentrated to the east of the existing Courthouse and City Hall. Retail expansion is shown along Main Street with a new development/redevelopment opportunity south of Mill Street and just east of Franklin School. It is important that any redevelopment south of Mill Street preserve and showcase the existing Corbin Mill historic site. Opportunities for government expansion include:

- **North of Mill Street between Missouri Street and Leonard Street:** A new government building is proposed as a south face to the proposed parking garage east of City Hall. The office building is intended to be separate from the garage to reduce costs of garage construction. The building should have entrances oriented to the street (Mill Street), and parking in the garage to the north. It should be at least two stories with a maximum of four stories possible.
- **South of Mill Street between Missouri Street and Leonard Street:** A significant government expansion opportunity is shown in this location. This development should also front on Mill Street, and it is desirable that some form of public space/plaza be incorporated into the design on the Mill Street side. The building could be as tall as four stories but should be at least two stories. Parking for the structure should be under the building or structured in some other fashion on-site.
- **North of the existing Juvenile Justice Center and west of Lightburne Street:** Additional government expansion is proposed in this location. The building should be two stories and include structured parking, accommodate continued shared parking with Second Baptist Church, and front on both Kansas Street and Lightburne Street.
- **North of Mississippi Street between Grover Street and Gallatin Street:** This site includes Fire Station #1 and the election board. The Task Force discussed this area as a location for the new police station as part of a larger public safety complex.

### Retail Expansion, Redevelopment and Development Opportunities

The Task Force supports retail expansion within the Downtown. The Downtown Master Plan proposes this for: the east side of Main Street where the Presbyterian Park currently exists;

along the east side of Gallatin Street at the Franklin Street, Kansas Street and Mill Street intersections; and on the south side of Kansas Street just east of City Hall. In addition, significant retail expansion is planned along an extension of Main Street south of Mill Street.

Specific development ideas include:

- **Mixed Use Development on the South Side of Mill Street along an extended Main Street:** This area is considered the primary area for mixed use redevelopment, and should be pedestrian-oriented, with buildings fronting the street, just as existing development does along Main Street to the north of Mill Street (exclusive of the County Courthouse and Jail). Parking should be at the rear or to the side of the structures. The ground floor should be reserved for retail with the second story used as office or residential space. A commuter rail stop is proposed near the railroad tracks.
- **Mixed Use Development on the south side of Kansas Street, east of City Hall:** This area is proposed as retail on the ground floor with office or residential on the second floor. It is to be separate from the parking garage, and form a screen for the garage from the Kansas Street side.
- **Mixed Use Development on the east side of Gallatin Street between Kansas Street and Mill Street:** This development is envisioned to flank a proposed parking garage along Gallatin Street. It should be two stories with retail on the ground floor and residential or office above. Entrances to the buildings should be on Kansas Street and Mill Street.

- **Mixed Use Development along Main Street on the Presbyterian Park site:** This is an important development opportunity because it will strengthen the connection between the Historic Liberty Jail Museum and the Square. Currently there is little of interest to draw pedestrians south to the Square. Developing additional retail space on the ground floor with residential above is ideal.
- **Infill Mixed Use Development:** Additional mixed use sites are shown on the ***Downtown Master Plan***. These reinforce important intersections and help improve the pedestrian environment. All retail mixed use sites depicted on the map should address the street and be two stories high.

### Other Development Opportunities North of Mill Street

Other sites north of Mill Street could be developed for higher density. These are primarily east of Gallatin Street and are proposed to be primarily residential.

- **Redevelopment at the southwest corner of Prairie Street and Mississippi Street:** This area, currently a previously-owned automobile lot, is proposed for residential development, such as townhouses or other higher density residential housing. This area is suitable for a small neighborhood commercial development as part of the housing project. Alternately, the site could become part of a public safety complex.

- **Residential Development on the full block at the northwest corner of Gallatin Street and Kansas Street:** The block is currently public parking with some commercial uses. The Plan proposes this block be developed as higher density residential. The buildings should be two-story row houses with all auto access and parking in the rear or center of the block. They should also be designed with front porches and/or stoops that front Kansas Street, Prairie Street and Franklin Street. The Downtown Task Force also discussed this site as a possibility for the new police station. As such, the front of the station should face Kansas Street.
- **Residential Infill Development between Prairie Street and Gallatin Street on the north side of Mill Street:** The Plan proposes this area to be smaller, single family residential; however, it would also be suitable for row-house development. The buildings should not exceed two stories. It is acceptable for the buildings facing Mill Street to be retail or other commercial on the ground floor with residential or office above.

### Traffic Calming on Mill Street

The Mill Street Corridor is anticipated to be an important mixed use corridor. Development should be pedestrian oriented, as it is important to improve the walking environment along Mill Street. The Downtown Task Force recommended that the City allow parking on the north side and intersection controls to calm traffic.

### Pedestrian Crossings at Lightburne Street

Lightburne Street is currently a barrier to pedestrians walking east/west, which impedes the connection between William Jewell and downtown. It is recommended that pedestrian activated crossings on Lightburne Street at Kansas Street and/or Franklin Street be installed to improve pedestrian accessibility to the downtown.

### Infill Development East and West on Mill Street

There are a number of redevelopment opportunities all along Mill Street. This is an important area because it has the highest traffic volume and therefore the highest retail potential in the Downtown. Redevelopment strategies for this area include:

- **Lightburne Street and Mill Street Intersection:** This intersection is a primary entrance into Downtown from the north, south and east. As such, redevelopment of this area as a gateway to Downtown is a priority. The southwest corner is slated for governmental expansion. The northeast and southeast corners are appropriate for commercial development. The uses that exist are not necessarily inappropriate if the architecture and site development could be improved. Development/redevelopment should be pedestrian oriented and brought to the street. Parking should be in the rear or to the side.

- **East of Mill Street/Lightburne Street Intersection:** This area is planned as residential; however some mixed use could also be appropriate. Vacant areas fronting the Christian Church parking lot to the south could be used for residential. This would complete an important section of streetscape and help to screen the parking lot from Mill Street.
- **West of Gallatin Street to Harrison Street:** This area has mixed use potential primarily on the north side of Mill Street. As shown on the Master Plan Map, residential uses are appropriate between Gallatin and Prairie streets while mixed use retail/office is appropriate from Prairie Street to Harrison Street, with the exception of the existing residential use at the northeast corner of Harrison and Mill streets.

### Development south of the Railroad Tracks

The area south of the railroad tracks and west of Leonard Street is largely vacant and under-used. It is also the site of the historic Liberty Spring. The Plan proposes this area be redeveloped as a neo-traditional residential neighborhood, following the principles outlined in the ***Blueprint for Liberty***. This development would also continue the extension of Main Street south of the tracks, trading the at-grade crossing at Shrader Street for one at Main Street. This would then complete a street loop of Main Street extended south to Shrader Street and east to Leonard Street. It is important that in any

development or redevelopment the Liberty Spring be preserved and enhanced.

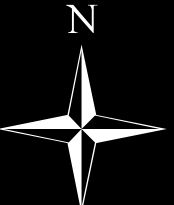
### Retain the Railroad

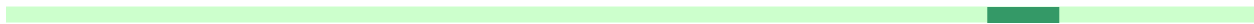
The Plan proposes that the railroad south of Mill Street be retained. This is consistent with recommendations in the ***Blueprint for Liberty***. The City should work with the Regional Transit Alliance to bring commuter rail to Liberty.



# Potential Redevelopment Opportunities for the Downtown Area

November 2005





# Appendix A. Development Projects

Chapter Two identified the high priority development projects. Following is a summary of all proposed development projects, classified by short, medium, or long-term priority. Conceptual cost information is provided in 2005 dollars and initial responsibility is assigned.

## Short-Term Projects

### Making Main Street Main Street – Area #1

*Enhance Main Street with street trees, decorative streetlights, and street furniture from Franklin Street to Mississippi Street. (See Page 20)*

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$1 million
- **Responsibility:** Business owners, property owners, and the City

### Parking East of City Hall – Area #2

*Construct parking garage, mixed use development, and civic building east of City Hall. (See Page 21)*

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$20 million
- **Responsibility:** City and County

### Parking East Side of Gallatin Street/ Kansas Street to Mill Street – Area #3

*Construct parking garage and mixed use development on east side of Gallatin Street between Mill and Kansas streets. (See Page 21)*

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$15 million
- **Responsibility:** Business owners and Property Owners/Private Development

### Intersection of Lightburne Street and Mill Street – Area #4

*Redevelop the intersection of Lightburne and Mill streets with mixed use and encourage traffic calming by providing on-street parking along Mill Street. (See Page 22)*

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$10 million
- **Responsibility:** City, State, County, Business owners and Property owners

## Medium-Term Projects

### North side of Mill Street, West of Prairie Street – Area #5

*Create single-story, mixed use development*

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$8 million
- **Responsibility:** Private development

### South side of Mill Street from Gallatin to Main Streets – Area #6

*Redevelop the site to include a large, two-story mixed use building at the southwest corner of Mill*

and Main Streets. Include additional smaller scale, two-story mixed use buildings on Main.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$18 million
- **Responsibility:** Private development

#### South side of Railroad Tracks – Area #7

Redevelop the site to include several single-family residential units (attached and detached) and a civic facility.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$8 million
- **Responsibility:** Private development

#### Mill Street Traffic Calming – Area #8

Install detached sidewalks with tree lawns (where feasible), tree plantings, and pedestrian lighting in tree lawns on both sides of Mill from just west of Dorsey Street to just east of Lightburne Street.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$1.5 million
- **Responsibility:** City

#### Mill Street West of Jewell – Area #9

Redevelop the site to include single-family, residential uses (attached and detached) on both the north and south sides of Mill Street.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$8.5 million
- **Responsibility:** Private development

## Long-Term Projects

#### South side of Mill Street, west of Franklin School – Area #10

Create single-story, mixed use development.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$5 million
- **Responsibility:** Private development

#### South side of Mill Street, east of Dorsey Street – Area #11

Potential development opportunity

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** Undetermined
- **Responsibility:** Private development

#### South side of Mississippi Street from Grover Street to Prairie Street – Area #12

Develop the site to include two-story, single-family (attached) residential development.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$2 million
- **Responsibility:** Private development

#### North side of Mississippi Street from Prairie Street to Gallatin Street – Area #13

Redevelop the site to include a civic building – possible location for a new police station.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** Undetermined
- **Responsibility:** City and County

The block formed by Franklin, Kansas, Prairie, and Gallatin Streets – Area #14

Redevelop the site to include a two-story mixed use and two-story single family residential (attached) development – this site is also a possibility for the new police facility.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$7 million
- **Responsibility:** Private development

North side of Mill Street from Prairie Street to Gallatin Street – Area #15

Redevelop the site to include single and two-story residential (attached and detached) development and a mixed use building.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$5 million
- **Responsibility:** Private development

East side of Gallatin Street from Mississippi Street to Franklin Street – Area #16

Redevelop the site to include a two-story parking garage with over 400 spaces and anchored by two-story single-family (attached) to the north and two-story, mixed-use development to the south.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$9.5 million
- **Responsibility:** Private development

North side of the Railroad Tracks – Area #17

Redevelop the site to include two-story mixed use and single story residential development.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$10 million
- **Responsibility:** Private development

South side of Kansas Street from Leonard Street to Lightburne Street – Area #18

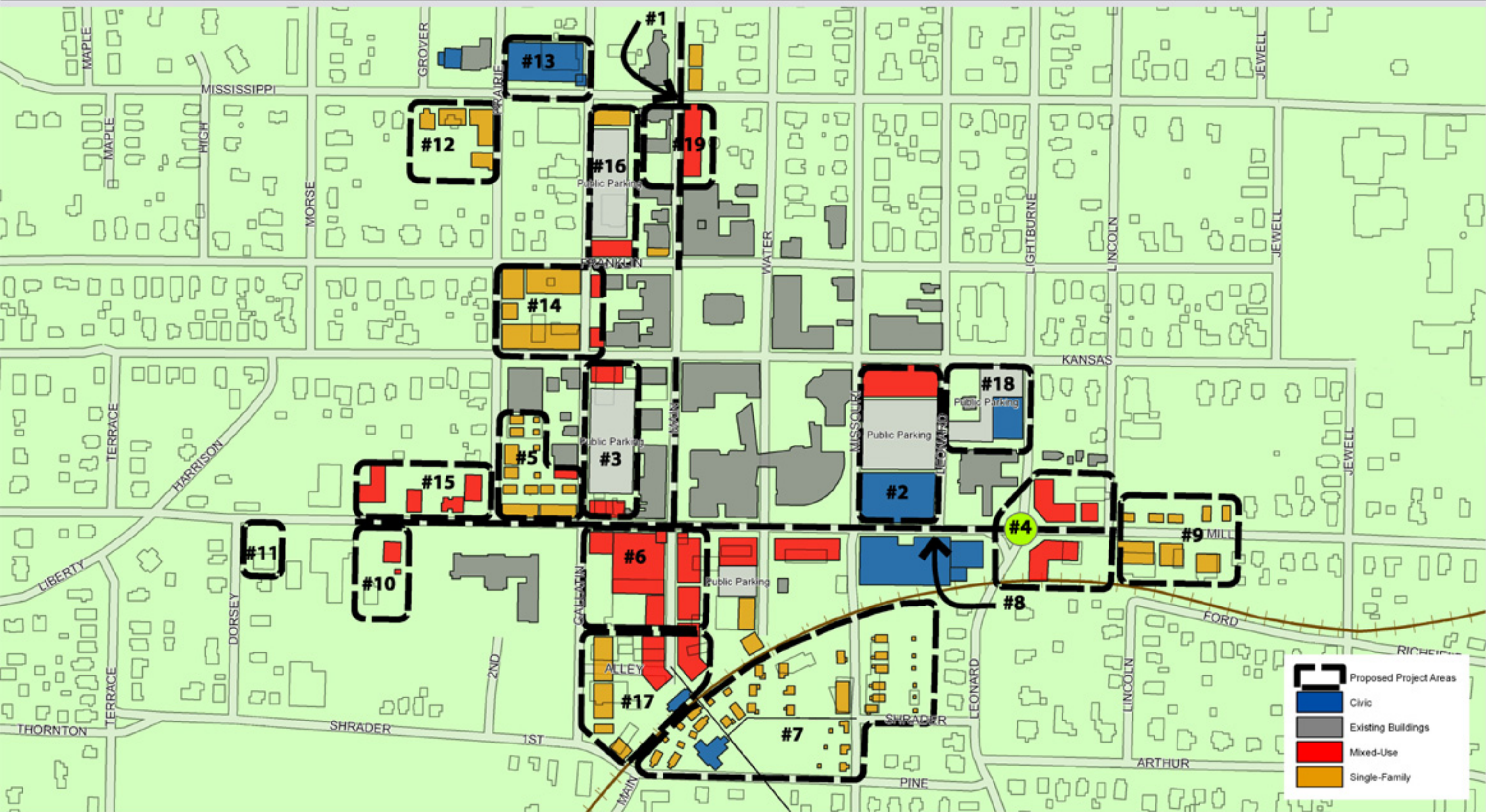
Redevelop the site to include a three-story civic building and additional surface parking in order to connect two existing surface lots.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$270,000 (not including the proposed civic facility)
- **Responsibility:** City and County

South side of Mississippi Street at Main Street – Area #19

Redevelop the site to include a two-story, mixed-use development project.

- **Conceptual Project Cost:** \$4 million
- **Responsibility:** Private development



# Liberty Downtown Master Plan

## Priority Project Areas November 2005

## Downtown Priority Projects and Assumptions

Assumptions				Priority Development Projects								Project Cost		Total Project Cost			
				Project Description													
				Area	Priority	Responsibility	Location/Type	Est. # Single-Family Units	Est. Sq. Ft.	Est. Linear Ft.	Est. Parking Spaces	Low	High	Low	High		
Development																	
3-Story Mixed Use, Retail, or Office Development Cost:				1	Short	Business owners, property owners, and the City	Main Street							\$845,580	\$990,420		
								Streetscape	0	0	2,450	0	\$845,580	\$990,420			
				2	Short	City and County	East of City Hall									\$18,814,647	\$19,871,600
								Parking Garage	0	132,548	0	818	\$12,372,926	\$12,372,926			
								Civic Facility	0	94,092	0	0	X	X			
							Mixed Use	0	42,278	0	0	\$6,341,721	\$7,398,674				
							Concept Study	0	0	0	0	\$100,000	\$100,000				
Single Family Residential (attatched and detached)				3	Short	Business owners and property owners	East side of Gallatin/Kansasa to Mill							\$13,351,269	\$13,717,707		
								Parking Garage	0	118,288	0	730	\$11,052,639	\$11,052,639			
								Mixed Use	0	14,658	0	0	\$2,198,630	\$2,565,068			
								Concept Study	0	0	0	0	\$100,000	\$100,000			
Average				4	Short	City, State, County, business owenrs, and property owners	Intersection of Lighburne and Mill							\$7,582,421	\$8,757,943		
								Streetscape	0	0	0	0	\$682,890	\$708,490			
								Mixed Use	0	45,997	0	0	\$6,899,531	\$8,049,453			
Parking				5	Medium	Private development	North side of Mill and West of Prairie							\$2,474,140	\$2,886,496		
								Mixed Use	0	16,494	0	0	\$2,474,140	\$2,886,496			
Garage				6	Medium	Private development	South side of Mill/Gallatin to Main							\$15,721,833	\$18,342,139		
								Mixed Use	0	104,812	0	0	\$15,721,833	\$18,342,139			
Average				7	Medium	Private development	South side of Railroad Tracks							\$5,720,000	\$7,800,000		
								Civic Facility	0	5,306	0	0	X	X			
Floors							Single-Family	26	52,000	0	0	\$5,720,000	\$7,800,000				
								Mill Street							\$1,293,360	\$1,470,840	
Required Parking Spaces:				8	Medium	City	Mill Street								\$2,640,000	\$3,600,000	
								Traffic Calming	0	X	4,420	0	\$1,293,360	\$1,470,840			
Recommended Concept Design:				9	Medium	Private development	Mill Street west of Jewell								\$498,073	\$581,085	
								Single-Family	12	24,000	0	0	\$2,640,000	\$3,600,000			
\$100,000				10	Long	Private development	South side of Mill West of School								X	X	
								Mixed Use	0	3,320	0	0	\$498,073	\$581,085			
Required Area for Development:				11	Long	Private development	South side of Mill East of Dorsey								\$1,540,000	\$2,100,000	
								Development Opportunity	X	14,400	0	0	X	X			
Office				12	Long	Private development	South side of Mississippi/Gower to Prairie										
								Single-Family	7	14,000	0	0	\$1,540,000	\$2,100,000			
Multifamily				13	Long	City and County	North side of Mississippi/Prairie to Gallatin								X	X	
								Civic Facility	0	24,714	0	0	X	X			
Streetscape				14	Long	Private development	Franklin to Kansas and Prairie to Gallatin								\$5,149,561	\$6,744,488	
								Mixed Use	0	9,397	0	0	\$1,409,561	\$1,644,488			
								Single-Family	17	34,000	0	0	\$3,740,000	\$5,100,000			
Basic Sidewalks:				15	Long	Private development	North side of Mill/Prairie to Gallatin								\$4,642,322	\$6,196,042	
								Mixed Use	0	4,549	0	0	\$682,322	\$796,042			
								Single-Family	18	36,000	0	0	\$3,960,000	\$5,400,000			
Benches:				16	Long	Private development	East side of Gallatin/Mississippi to Franklin								\$8,854,970	\$9,461,780	
								Mixed Use	0	11,472	0	0	\$1,720,859	\$2,007,668			
Pedestrian Lighting:							Single-Family	4	8,000	0	0	\$880,000	\$1,200,000				
								Parking Garage	0	65,384	0	404	\$6,154,111	\$6,154,111			
								Concept Study	0	0	0	0	\$100,000	\$100,000			
Low				17	Long	Private development	North side of Railroad Tracks								\$8,182,905	\$9,980,056	
								Mixed Use	0	39,886	0	0	\$5,982,905	\$6,980,056			
High							Single-Family	10	20,000	0	0	\$2,200,000	\$3,000,000				
								South side of Kansas/Leonard to Lightburne								\$272,339	\$272,339
Street Trees:				18	Long	City and County	South side of Kansas/Leonard to Lightburne										
								Civic Facility	0	3,221	0	0	X	X			
							Surface Parking	0	22,059	0	0	\$272,339	\$272,339				
Other Landscaping and Amenities:				19	Long	Private development	South side of Mississippi at Main								\$3,319,363	\$3,872,590	
								Mixed Use	0	22,129	0	0	\$3,319,363	\$3,872,590			
Construction Costs:				Grand Total				94	983,006	6,870	1,952	\$100,902,783	\$116,645,526	\$100,902,783	\$116,645,526		
Design/Admin				15%													
Contingency				10%													
				X = Undetermined													
				All costs shown are in 2005 dollars.													
				Public initiative/funding													
				Private initiative/funding													
				Public and Private initiative/funding													

# Appendix B. Additional Parking Information

## Amount of Proposed Parking

The Plan recommends that three parking garages be constructed in the downtown area. Two- and three-story garages are recommended for Gallatin Street; another three-story garage is proposed for Missouri Street, east of City Hall. The parking garages will create nearly 2,000 spaces downtown.

On-street parking spaces are proposed for Franklin, Kansas, Gallatin, Water, Missouri, Leonard, and Lightburne Streets. The additional striped spaces will add more than 150 new spaces.

Over 2,100 new parking spaces are proposed for Downtown.

Amount of Proposed Parking Spaces			
Location	On-Street	Parking Garage	Total
<b>Franklin</b>			<b>9</b>
East of Prairie	9	0	
<b>Kansas</b>			<b>36</b>
East of Prairie	9	0	
Prairie to Gallatin	5	0	
Water to Missouri	11	0	
Leonard to Lightbourne	11	0	
<b>Gallatin</b>			<b>1,144</b>
Mississippi to Franklin	0	404	
Franklin to Kansas	10	0	
Kansas to Mill	0	730	
<b>Water</b>			<b>7</b>
North of Mill	7	0	
<b>Missouri</b>			<b>870</b>
North of Franklin	11	0	
Kansas to Mill	41	818	
<b>Leonard</b>			<b>28</b>
Franklin to Kansas	11	0	
Kansas to Mill	17	0	
<b>Lightburne</b>			<b>24</b>
Franklin to Kansas	6	0	
Kansas to Mill	18	0	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>1,952</b>	<b>2,118</b>
*Assumption: 9' x 18' parallel parking spaces			

## Demand for Parking

The Plan's recommendation for the development of over 800,000 square feet of new mixed use and civic development will result in a demand for nearly 1,850 new spaces. However, given the total amount of new parking proposed, Downtown will ultimately have a surplus of approximately 275 parking spaces.

Parking Demand							
Area	Potential Development Opportunity		Mixed Use		Civic		Total Parking Need
	(Sq. Ft.)	Spaces Needed	(Sq. Ft.)	Spaced Needed	(Sq. Ft.)	Spaces Needed	
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	42,278	169	94,092	376	545
3	0	0	14,658	59	0	0	59
4	0	0	45,997	184	0	0	184
5	0	0	16,494	66	0	0	66
6	0	0	104,812	419	0	0	0
7	0	0	0	0	5,306	21	21
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	0	0	3,320	13	0	0	13
11	14,400	58	0	0	0	0	58
12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	0	0	0	0	24,714	99	99
14	0	0	9,397	38	0	0	38
15	0	0	4,549	18	0	0	18
16	0	0	11,474	46	0	0	46
17	0	0	39,886	160	0	0	160
18	0	0	3,500	14	3,221	13	27
19	0	0	22,129	89	0	0	89
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,400</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>318,494</b>	<b>1,274</b>	<b>127,333</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>1,841</b>
<b>Total Proposed Parking</b>							<b>2,118</b>
<b>Total Parking Surplus</b>							<b>277</b>
<b>*Assumption: 4 spaces/1,000 square feet</b>							

# Appendix C. Funding Sources

## Funding Sources

Supplemental information about Liberty's 2005-2007 Capital Improvements Plan is included below along with detailed descriptions of other funding tools and resources including:

- Tax Increment Financing
- Special Assessment Districts
- Chapter 353 Tax Abatement
- Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority
- Community Development Block Grant
- Special Contribution Districts
- Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit
- Brownfield Redevelopment Program
- Surface Transportation Program
- Missouri Transportation Enhancement Program
- 504 and RLF Loan Program

## Capital Improvements Plan

The City's ***Three-Year Capital Improvements Plan*** outlines how Liberty will balance its financial resources on capital projects including neighborhood improvement projects, major roadway improvements, street maintenance/repair, storm water improvements, parks and recreation, fire, utility and capital improvements, prior year's projects, and debt service. Capital improvement revenue sources include:

- Liberty 2010
- Federal/State Funding
- Roadway Development Fund
- Parks Capital Fund
- Fire Sales Tax
- Water Capital Fund
- Sewer Capital Fund
- Development Funding

## Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Local economic redevelopment (that occurs within a designated redevelopment area established pursuant to the TIF Act) is expected to generate increased tax revenues through the increase of the value of the real property. Other economic activities, such as sales and utility taxes within that area, are also expected to increase. The increase in the local tax revenue generated by the redevelopment projects within the designated redevelopment area is called the "tax increment."

The tax increment from local real property taxes ("PILOTs") and 50 percent of the increment from economic activity taxes ("EATs") are available to finance eligible project costs, such as the construction of public infrastructure, site clearance and related project expenses.

**Eligibility:** Projects using Tax Increment Financing must have plans approved by both the Tax Increment Financing Commission (TIFC) and the City Council. Missouri Statutes require TIF projects to be redevelopment projects that would not reasonably be expected to develop without the assistance of TIF. A designated TIF area must qualify under the TIF Act by meeting one of three designations:

- A finding of blight or blighting conditions in the area
- A Conservation Area in the city in which 50 percent or more of the structures are 35 years or older
- An Economic Development Area which does not meet the requirements for a “Blighted Area” or “Conservation Area,” and in which the Council finds that redevelopment is in the public interest because it will discourage economic development activities from moving to another state; or result in increased employment; or result in preservation or enhancement of the tax base of the City

**Benefits:** There are several benefits associated with Tax Increment Financing:

- TIF revenues (PILOTs/EATs) may be used to meet debt service obligations if bonds are sold to finance a project.
- TIF revenues may be used to annually reimburse eligible development costs including, but not limited to, capital and/ or infrastructure improvements in the project area.

- Approved TIF plans may confer the power of eminent domain for project-related site assembly.

## Special Assessment Districts

A special assessment district is an area in which property owners voluntarily tax themselves to provide public improvement projects designed to help upgrade the area and establish a district entity. Special Business Districts (SBD), Community Improvement Districts (CID), and Neighborhood Improvement Districts (NID) are three ways of achieving the same goals for property owners. There has been widespread interest from business organizations in forming these districts.

### Special Business Districts (SBD)

The City may establish an SBD to make improvements within specified boundaries. The SBD can tax real property and businesses in the district to fund improvements, and it can issue bonds for maintaining or improving public facilities within the district.

### Community Improvement Districts (CID)

The CID could provide assistance for construction, installation, repair, maintenance and equipment associated with a variety of public improvements and facilities.

District funding can be achieved through a district-wide special assessment, rents, fees, and charges for the use of CID property or services, grants, gifts, donations, or other contributions. The funding that results could also be combined with other resources to fund additional services and improvements.

If the CID is organized as a political subdivision, special assessments and property and sales taxes may be imposed within its boundaries. If organized as a non-profit corporation, it may only impose special assessments.

- **Special assessment costs** can be allocated per square foot of property, per square foot on each square foot of improvement, or by abutting foot of property abutting streets, roads, highways, parks or other improvements, or any other reasonable method at a rate not to exceed a specified amount and set to expire on specified date.
- **Real property taxes** can be levied upon (all real property) within the district at a determined dollar amount per hundred dollars assessed valuation for a determined period of time.

- **District sales and use tax** on all retail sales made in such district which are subject to taxation (pursuant to sections 144.010 to 144.525, RSMo), except sales of motor vehicles, trailers, boats or outboard motors and sales to public utilities. Any sales and use tax imposed pursuant to this section may be imposed at a rate of one-eighth of one percent, one-fourth of one percent, three-eighths of one percent, one-half of one percent, or one percent for a specified number of years.
- **Governance:** A board of businesses, property owners, and voters either elected or appointed by City Council would oversee the District's activities. If the District is funded completely with assessments, a nonprofit agency could serve as the administrator. Thus, within the District's boundaries, the CID could provide assistance for the construction, installation, repair, maintenance and equipment associated with a variety of public improvements and facilities. The District could also be used to fund security and promotional activities.

### Neighborhood Improvement District (NID)

A NID could also be created for either residential or commercial Downtown properties, which would provide financing for Downtown public improvements, such as streets, water systems, streetlights, etc. This program allows the City to issue a special assessment against the real property located within the NID boundaries. The City may issue general obligation bonds to pay for improvements.

## Chapter 353 Tax Abatement

The Urban Redevelopment Corporation Law, State Statute “Chapter 353,” establishes incentives to stimulate private investment and redevelopment of blighted areas in the city. Redevelopment is defined by “Chapter 353” to involve the clearance, planning, reconstruction/ rehabilitation of any blighted area, and provision for such industrial, commercial, residential, public structures and recreational developments.

### Eligibility/Requirements:

- A finding of blight or blighting conditions in the project area
- Preparation of a redevelopment plan
- Legal description of the area and stages of the project
- Buildings and sites to be acquired, demolished, or renovated and new construction
- Property for public agencies and zoning and street changes
- Accommodations for relocation of displaced individuals and businesses
- Project financing and plans for use of eminent domain and evidence of blight within the area

**Benefits:** Granted for 100 percent of the value of the real property for a ten-year period. For the following 15 years, Chapter 353 allows for 50 percent abatement on property taxes. Property taxes on the assessed value of the property

before new construction or rehabilitation is paid at their original rate to the appropriate taxing districts in the form of a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT).

Use of the city’s power of eminent domain enables the developer to condemn properties that could not be acquired through normal negotiations.

## Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority (LCRA)

LCRA incentives are designed to encourage private investment and assist in the removal of blight and blighting conditions within urban renewal areas. LCRA designates urban renewal areas and the associated redevelopment plans.

**Eligibility:** LCRA projects must be physically located within an established Urban Renewal Area. The Projects must also be in accordance with the use and design plans of the associated Urban Renewal Plan (URP). The URP is governed by state statute (“Chapter 99”) to indicate such land acquisition, demolition and removal of structures, redevelopment improvements and rehabilitation as may be proposed for the Urban Renewal Area. The LCRA staff review project plans for conformance with the urban renewal plan, including building use and design elements appropriate to the

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surrounding neighborhoods, as well as, jobs and housing units treated.

**Benefits:** Use of the power of eminent domain for site acquisition. Tax abatement for property owners looking to improve their properties at 100 percent of the assessed value of improvements for a ten-year period.

### Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Through the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-383, as amended), the US Department of Housing and Urban Development offers non-entitlement Missouri communities (cities with populations below 50,000 and counties with populations under 200,000) Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) funds to address critical health and safety concerns, improve local facilities, and develop a greater capacity for growth.

**Benefits:** Funds are offered to a wide variety of projects from industrial loans and job training to housing and street repairs.

### Special Contribution Areas

A special contribution area is an area in which developers are assessed a contribution dollar

amount for the anticipated impact that their development will have on the surrounding area. Typically the contributions are allocated for road improvements and enhancements that are needed because of the increased traffic that is generated by the development.

### Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit

There are state and federal programs that provide tax credits for the substantial rehabilitation of historic properties. The program is designed to promote the reuse and retention of historic properties by offsetting some of the expense of rehabilitation. The state tax credit, 25 percent of the qualifying rehabilitation costs, may be sold directly and serve as a component of the financing for a project. The federal tax credit of 20 percent, while it cannot be sold directly, will offset the rehabilitation costs of the project. Both tax credits may be used in conjunction with other incentive plans, such as the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, TIF, and 353s.

#### Eligibility:

- For properties listed individually or as a contributing structure in a district listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or in a Certified Local District, the rehabilitation must be substantial; defined as an amount greater than 50 percent of the owner's basis (acquisition cost) in the building or \$5,000.

- Creates incentives for owners of homes in older historic areas to rehabilitate the structures for continued use, as opposed to demolition.
- Creates incentives for owners of income producing properties, including apartments, to upgrade the systems for modern use and offset some of those costs.
- Allows for the economically feasible reuse of buildings that may not otherwise add to the tax base.

#### **Approval Process:**

- Request a historic property certification from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).
- Outline project and receive approval that proposed project meets guidelines set out in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Complete project and submit documentation to SHPO to receive certification that is completed according to guidelines.

### **Brownfield Redevelopment Program**

A brownfield site may contain unsafe contaminants that can hinder revitalization and/or redevelopment. Today there are an estimated 450,000 abandoned and contaminated brownfield sites in the country. Through the 2002 Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfield Revitalization Act, the nation's Brownfield Program approves up to \$250 million in brownfield grants each year. It also expands the

definition of a "brownfield" to include sites contaminated by petroleum, areas polluted by the manufacture of illegal drugs, and lands scarred by mining.

**Benefits:** Potential brownfield fund recipients may compete for funds awarded in the following four categories:

- Assessment Grants to assess and plan for eventual cleanup of one or more brownfield sites
- Cleanup Grants that allow recipients to cleanup brownfield sites they own
- Revolving Loan Grants that communities can use to make low-interest loans for the cleanup of brownfield sites
- Job-training Grants for environmental training of people living in brownfield communities.

### **Surface Transportation Program (STP)**

The Federal Highway Administration sub-allocates Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds to the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) for an assortment of different transportation projects. The Kansas City region's long-range transportation funding objectives are outlined in *Transportation Outlook 2030*, the region's 30-year transportation plan. Though there is a certain amount of flexibility in the allocation of STP funds, priority funding is

typically given to projects that forward the following:

- Increased emphasis on maintaining transportation infrastructure
- Increased modal choice
- Better integrated projects into the community
- Better managed roadway capacity

**Eligibility:** All cities and counties within the boundaries of MARC's Missouri planning area, all transportation corporations within MARC's metropolitan planning area, the Missouri Department of Transportation, the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority, and MARC are eligible to apply for Missouri STP funds.

**Benefits:** Missouri STP funds within the MARC boundaries can be used for the following:

- Highway (including interstate highways) and bridge projects (including bridges on public roads of all functional classifications)
- Alternative mode projects
- Safety projects
- Transportation control measures
- Natural habitat and wetlands mitigation efforts (related to STP-funded projects)
- Infrastructure-based intelligent systems capital improvements;
- Environmental restoration and pollution abatement projects

## Missouri Transportation Enhancement Program

Through the Missouri Highway and Transportation Committee, the Missouri Transportation Enhancement program awards federal Surface Transportation Program funds to projects that will enhance the region's transportation system outside of typical bridge and road enhancements. Potential projects might involve:

- Landscaping and aesthetic enhancements
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Preservation of historic transportation facilities and structures
- Transportation projects to improve water quality

Successful applicants will enter into federal aid agreements with the Missouri Highway and Transportation Commission to receive approvals for project development activities and ultimately be reimbursed for eligible expenses incurred in implementing these projects.

## 504 and Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Programs

The Clay/Platte Development Corporation offers the 504 and Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) programs to businesses allowing them to receive low-interest, fixed-rate loans for growth including the creation and retention of jobs for projects in

Platte and Clay counties as well as other Missouri locations.

**504 Loan Program:** The Clay/Platte

Development Corporation offers the 504 Program to assist healthy and expanding eligible small commercial and industrial business issues. Start-ups are also eligible but on a case-by-case basis. The program provides up to 40 percent financing for an eligible project. Typically, an applicant's bank finances up to 50 percent of project; the borrower provides a minimum of ten percent. With new businesses (those in existence less than two years), the borrower provides 15 percent and the 504 is reduced to thirty-five percent. On limited or single-purpose buildings/structures, the borrower also provides 15 percent and the 504 35 percent. Funding allocations are as follows:

- Minimum \$50,000 loan
- Maximum \$1.5 million for project meeting the job creation or community development goal. (The company being financed must demonstrate that it will create one job per \$50,000 of 504 debenture amount over a period of two years from project completion for regular or public policy projects. For small manufacturing projects, one job must be created for every \$100,000 of 504 debenture).
- Maximum \$2 million for projects fulfilling a public policy goal (minority-, veteran-, or

woman-owned business, rural development, business district revitalization, exporting, etc.)

- \$4 million for small manufacturing projects  
*Note: The net 504 portion cannot exceed 40 percent of the total project costs or the Bank's share.*

**Eligibility:** A for-profit, operating company that is structured as a limited liability company, proprietorship, partnership, corporation, etc., and has a maximum net worth of \$7.0 million and a minimum net profit of \$2.5 million (after taxes during the two years prior) would be eligible. Passive companies are eligible provided that the borrower meets the same guidelines and uses the loan proceeds to assist the eligible operating company or companies in the project. Joint borrowers are also eligible if both meet the guidelines. Project must be located in Missouri.

**Benefits:** Acquisition of land and buildings, construction and/or renovation, equipment and furnishings, interim interest and professional fees for appraisals, surveying, accounting, engineering, and architectural services are included among eligible project costs.

**RLF Program:** The Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program is Clay/Platte Development Corporation's (CPDC) direct loan program.

Repayments from the loans provided are returned to the fund to be loaned again. The purpose of the program is to provide eligible small business with needed “gap” financing. Borrowers can receive awards ranging from \$25,000 – over \$150,000.

**Eligibility:** Existing for-profit businesses and start-ups (on a per case basis) are eligible. Manufacturing, processing or assembling of products, service-business operations, and retail are among eligible business types.

**Benefits:** Fixed Assets, such as real estate improvements, machinery and equipment, and furniture and fixtures area among eligible project costs.

### **Missouri Downtown Economic Stimulus Act (MODESA)**

Pursuant to sections 99.915 to 99.980, RSMo (HB 289, 2003), the State of Missouri provides assistance with downtown redevelopment and job creation through the Missouri Downtown Economic Stimulus Act (MODESA). The program supplies funding for public infrastructure and associated costs for a maximum of 25 years.

#### **Eligibility:**

- Municipalities with annual median household incomes of \$62,000 or less.
- Central business districts (the area at or near the historic core locally know as the “downtown”) that are classified as blighted or conservation areas and where at least half of the total building stock that is 35 years in age or older.
- Projects that can be classified as “community enhancement” or “job creation.” The population of the municipality determines the sum total of project costs and/or new job creation minimums.

#### **Funding Limits:**

- A development project will not receive funds until it generates increment. Neither can it receive more than half of the increased amount of state tax and/or income tax it generates.
- The program is limited in any year to the amount appropriated by the General Assembly. The law does not allow an annual appropriation to exceed \$108,000,000, but the actual amount available in any year will depend upon the amount appropriated by the General Assembly.
- In the event appropriations from the funds are not adequate to cover approved disbursements, projects will receive a pro-rata share of increment.

## Local Option Sales Tax

With the establishment of an Economic Development Tax Board and voter approval, cities and counties are permitted to levy up to a one-half percent sales tax for the redevelopment of historic districts and downtowns, which may also include retail development. This tax is referred to as the Local Option Sales Tax and is also known as “Local Option Economic Development Sales Tax.”

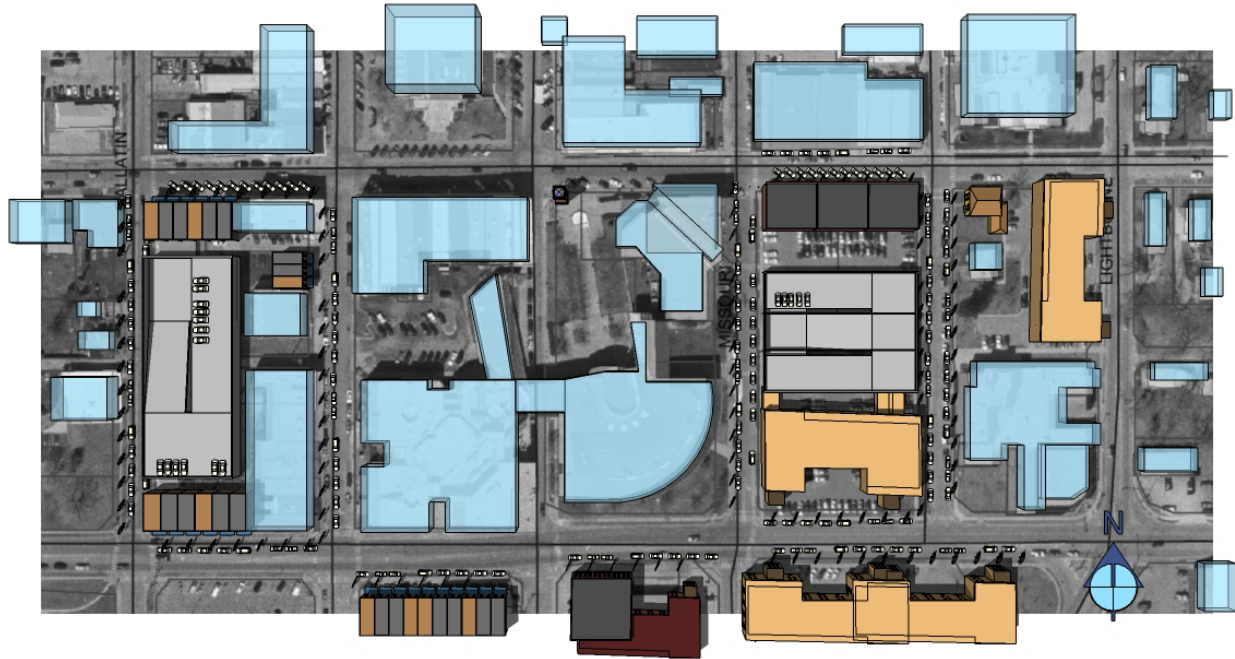
and planning; and developing value-added and export opportunities for Missouri agricultural products.

### Funding Limits:

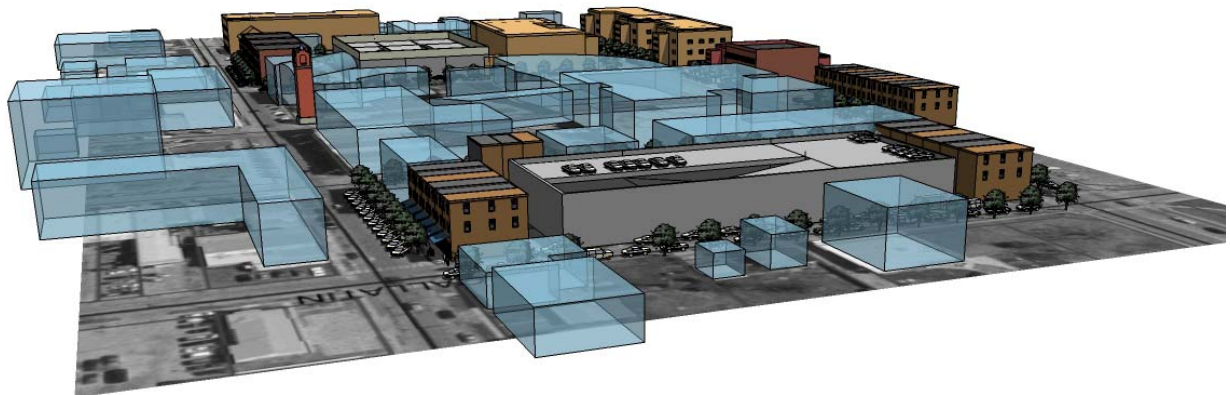
- Not greater than 25 percent of the funds generated annually can be used for administrative purposes, such as facility costs and staffing.
- A minimum of 20 percent of funds can be used to finance long-range efforts associated with readying for economic development including land acquisition, infrastructure installation, water and wastewater treatment capacity, street extension, public facilities linked to job creation and economic development, and matching funds for state and/or federal grants.
- The balance of the revenues created can be used to fund activities, such as marketing; providing grants and loans for infrastructure, site development, equipment acquisition, and job training; site development and infrastructure; training programs geared to prepare workers for working with advanced technologies and highly-skilled jobs; funding legal and accounting expenses immediately related to economic development preparation



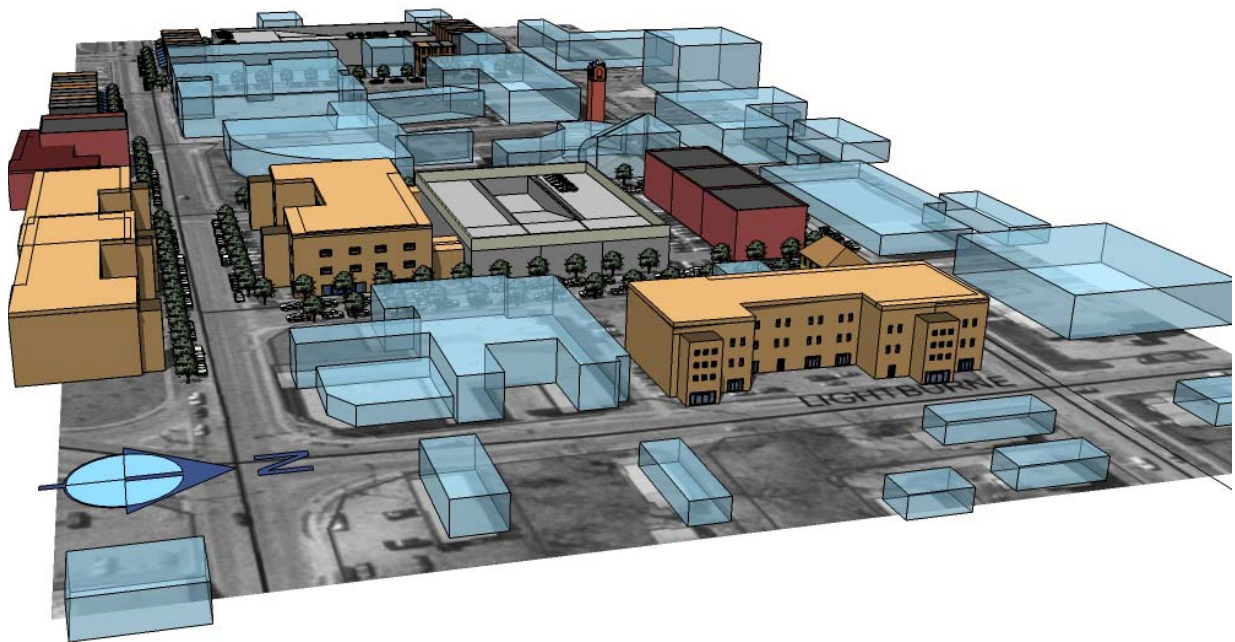
## Appendix D. Development Illustrations



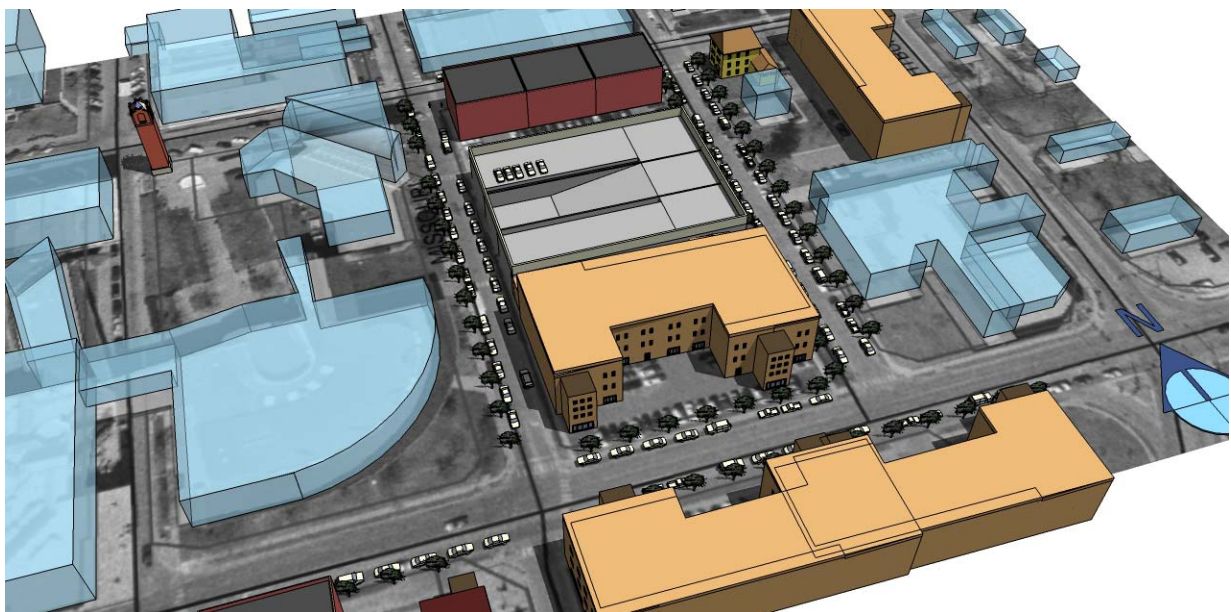
*Bird's Eye View of Downtown Development South of the Square*



*Gallatin Street from Kansas Street to Mill Street Looking East*



***Lightburne Street from Mill Street to Kansas Street Looking West***



***Mill Street from Water Street to Lightburne Street Looking North***



***Kansas Street from Lightburne Street to Missouri Street Looking South***



***Corner of Lightburne and Kansas Streets Looking West***



***Revitalized Main Street***



***Revitalized Kansas Street, East of City Hall***



***Café behind By the Book Bookstore***